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TO : Department of State

FROM : Amembassy MOSCOW

SUBJECT : Soviet Space Effort

REF : Department's A-32, 3/12/71 (Collection requirement no. C-SI-1-55794)

After looking back carefully at the history of US-USSR relations in the outerspace field--seen against the backdrop of known Soviet policies--we are forced to the following conclusions about the future of this relationship.

The Soviet will continue to dangle before the United States the possibility of broad space cooperation in order to gain access to the special US technology which they need for their programs. Exchanges will be maintained at a level just high enough to obtain the desired information and with just enough external publicity to prevent disillusionment of the US public and government agencies. Contacts will not be permitted to develop to a point which might allow learning any details of the military aspects of the Soviet space program or which would risk tarnishing the image of Soviet space superiority over the US in the eyes of the Soviet people and foreign Communists.

I.

As previously, statements and actions will be carefully orchestrated to produce the desired effects in the US. Occasional unspecific intimations of eventual "brotherhood in space" will be released when needed for a politically relaxant effect on the US public and Congress as well as to stimulate continued deliveries of technology.

The pattern of public relations prior to the recent launchings of "Salyut" and "Soyuz-10", with variations as circumstances require, will doubtless be continued. Deliberately neglecting the well-used channel of official correspondence, an "open letter" signed by nineteen cosmonauts urging greater space cooperation with the US was splashed in Pravda on April 11

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for easy pickup by US journalists. At the same time the impression was given to Soviet readers that this call was prompted by the recalcitrance of the United States. The traditional pre-launch secrecy indicated, however, that no basic change in policy with regard to broad cooperation --which would require a considerable relaxation of such secrecy--was impending.

The launching was preceded by an article by the secret police journalist Victor LOUIS in a London newspaper saying that the USSR would offer the United States the right to use the new orbiting station for some experiments. This "unofficial" statement may have been designed to provoke such a request by the United States--which could be used by Soviet propagandists to give credibility to Soviet claims of superiority in space technology. The apparent failure of the mission seems to have aborted its propaganda exploitation as well. A certain amount of published information and "indiscretions" by cosmonauts and others are issued in order to mislead foreigners or to provoke technical or other reactions of interest to Soviet agencies (desinformatsiya /disinformation/ in Soviet officialese). A recent example was the "leak" by a Komsomolskaya Pravda "correspondent" in New York that the USSR would launch a manned lunar mission before the end of the 24th Party Congress, which ended on April 10.

The image of superiority in the field of space exploration--conspicuous to the masses--is necessary to the support of the Soviet claim that Marxism-Leninism is a super-science embracing and pointing the way to all other sciences. This assertion is expressed in statements such as that Lenin anticipated the discoveries of modern physics. The link between space and ideology in official dogma precludes broad cooperation with the class enemy, the bourgeoisie, exemplified by the US.

II.

Lenin endorsed the appropriation of "all that is useful" from capitalism, thus providing a scriptural basis for the acquisition of foreign technology by any means. A long duration manned orbiting station, which obviously must precede an American station, may not be possible without the aid of the Americans. The political price of supping with the devil is deemed to be tolerable if the devil can be persuaded to part with his knowledge. The regime feels confident that it can restrict awareness of its partial dependence on American technology to those with a need to know. (Case in point: Pravda recently devoted half a page to the Fiat-built Togliatti automobile plant without mentioning Fiat.) Brief references to US space successes and cooperation in the speeches of the President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences are made partly for the effect on the US and partly to give the impression that nothing is being

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concealed. In the article by Sevastyanov and Faddeev for elite readers in Kommunist, No. 3, 1971, however, there are no such references. Sovetskaya Rossiya, one of the papers of the Central Committee, in a space article on April 20, 1971, referred to cooperation with France, but the only mention of the US was a charge that the US had contaminated space with radioactivity in the Starfish experiment. The Soviet media will probably even give the impression, in future exchanges, that the US is partly dependent upon Soviet expertise.

III.

All that can be said of the mass of published information over the past year is that a semi-permanent manned orbiting station has been mentioned more insistently than any other goal. Difficulties have been reported, suspected, or admitted in two aspects necessary to the construction and operation of such a station, called "DOS" (for dolgovremennaya orbital'naya stantsiya) in Russian, i. e., in approach and docking, and in adaptation of man to prolonged weightlessness and readaptation to terrestrial conditions. The fact that these are the subjects chosen for some contacts with the US is further confirmation of the priority of the DOS in Soviet plans. Keldysh, in his speech of April 12 implied a gradual achievement of this goal and spoke of much further work to be done.

IV.

Most of the economic tasks assigned to an orbiting station in Soviet articles are being done at present, one assumes inadequately, by unmanned spacecraft, although the latter are undergoing rapid improvement. An article signed by the popular Major-General Georgiy BEREGOVY in Moskovskaya Pravda on March 21 tries hard to sell the DOS on its economic merits--perhaps to still complaints from consumer-oriented delegates to the XXIVth Party Congress then opening. The Embassy cannot judge the cost-effectiveness of the other economic tasks, which could be performed only on board a manned station, which are mentioned in the article by Sevastyanov and Faddeev, but is convinced that purposes unrelated to economics are the prime factor.

V.

There has been a deafening silence on Soviet military applications (though not on charges of US military uses of space) for several years. On January 16, 1968, Marshal Krylov mentioned the feasibility of orbital rocket launches in Red Star, and P. T. ASTASHENKOV in Soviet Rocket Troops, 1964 (p. 56) mentions ".....a rocket from on board the mother rocket could deliver a load not to the moon or Mars, but to Earth." An article by Academician Zuyev in Pravda on October 20, 1970, mentions the advantage--

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obviously military--of locating targets on the earth from a manned orbiting station "with an accuracy of a few tens of centimeters".

VI.

To sum up, the probable next phase of the Soviet space program will be a long-duration manned orbiting station, designed to provide dividends in the military and political spheres and perhaps also in the economic sphere. Highly selective cooperation with the US has reluctantly been sought by the Soviets in hopes of acquiring sophisticated technology with which to accelerate their programs, not excluding one designed to secure a long-range technical advantage in the missile race.

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